

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant	:	Liu, et al.
Appl. No.	:	10/646,103
Filed	:	August 22, 2003
For	:	PASSIVATED MAGNETO- RESISTIVE BIT STRUCTURE AND PASSIVATION METHOD THEREFOR
Examiner	:	Marcos D. Pizarro Crespo
Group Art Unit	:	2814

REPLY BRIEF

Mail Stop Appeal Brief-Patents

Commissioner for Patents

P.O. Box 1450

Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Dear Sir:

This Reply Brief is being submitted under 37 C.F.R. § 41.41 in response to the Examiner's Answer mailed on November 28, 2006.

This Reply Brief is intended to supplement the arguments presented in Appellants' earlier briefs. Because many of the issues raised in the Examiner's Answer have already been fully briefed by Appellants, this Reply Brief only addresses certain new issues that are raised by the Examiner's Answer of November 28, 2006.

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Related Appeals and Interferences

Pursuant to 37 C.F.R. § 41.37(c)(2), Appellants hereby notify the Board of Patent Appeals that Appeal No. 2006-3363, U.S. Patent Application No. 10/873,363 filed on June 21, 2004, which is now currently under appeal, may be related to, directly affect or be directly affected by or have a bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

Appellants, the Appellants Legal Representative, and the Assignee do not know of any other appeals or interferences that will directly affect or be directly affected by or have any bearing on the Board's decision in the pending appeal.

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Status of Claims

Claims 1-7 have been canceled via the concurrently-filed amendment.

Claims 8-20 are allowed.

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Grounds of Rejections to be Reviewed on Appeal

As of the Examiner's Answer mailed on November 28, 2006, only Claims 1-7 were on appeal. In view of the cancellation of Claims 1-7, the grounds of rejections are now moot.

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Arguments

In the Examiner's Answer mailed on November 28, 2006, the Examiner maintains the rejection of Claims 1-7 and allows Claims 8-20.

Without acquiescing to the Examiner's rejections of Claims 1-7, Appellants have canceled Claims 1-7 without prejudice herewith to speed issuance of Claims 8-20. Accordingly, the Appeal is now moot. Appellants reserve the right to pursue any of the canceled claims in a continuation application.

Respectfully submitted,

KNOBBE, MARTENS, OLSON & BEAR, LLP

Dated: Jan. 29, 2007

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